

**From:** [Mace Barron](#)  
**To:** [William Benson](#); [Rick Greene](#); [Mace Barron](#)  
**Subject:** Re: oil spills update (Wednesday)  
**Date:** 05/27/2010 08:30 AM

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(b) (5)

▼ [William Benson](#)

----- Original Message -----

**From:** William Benson  
**Sent:** 05/27/2010 04:10 AM EDT  
**To:** Rick Greene; "Mace Barron" <barron.mace@epa.gov>  
**Subject:** oil spills update (Wednesday)

(b) (5)

▼ [Michele Conlon](#)

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Michele Conlon  
**Sent:** 05/26/2010 11:12 PM EDT  
**To:** Larry Reiter; William Benson; Linda Sheldon  
**Cc:** Hal Zenick; Robert Dyer; Emily Smith; Lek Kadeli; Paul Anastas  
**Subject:** oil spills update (Wednesday)

Recent activity has related to: Analyzing Dispersants, Comparing Dispersants, Dioxin, ORD Expertise for Key Operations, OGC Guidance on CBI and Synthesizing Information on Hot Topics

Chemical Analysis of Dispersant:

In an effort to support R4 and R6 in developing their sampling plans, NERL-Vegas continues to test analytical techniques that can be used to detect the dispersant in sea water. Today we held a telephone conference with R4 and R6 chemists to discuss the approaches we have each explored, and share information about successes and challenges. To better streamline communication channels, Rick McMillin in R6 has agreed to be the point of contact for inquiries from other Regional labs who are interested in developing capacity to help with sample analyses. We've all seen a substantial increase in the number of calls we've gotten from other Regional labs, and funneling them through Rick is our attempt to be responsive and provide consistent information to all the labs.

OGC Guidance on CBI:

OGC has provided us revised guidance concerning dispersant information that is considered CBI. We have been advised that EPA employees who are directly involved in dispersant analysis can discuss and share information about all the components of the dispersants, even those the manufacturer identifies as proprietary. Furthermore, Nalco (manufacturer of COREXIT) has waived its CBI claim for EPA employees and contractors involved in dispersant assessment. This

guidance will allow us to much more readily help the Regions develop test and sampling protocols, as well as help us more readily research the intended and unintended consequences of remediation approaches.

#### Comparison of Available Dispersants:

Following Administrator Jackson's request that BP identify a dispersant less toxic than COREXIT, BP first announced that it would substitute Sea Brat dispersant; however, it quickly became known that Sea Brat contains NPE - a constituent that degrades to the endocrine disrupting compound NP. Given this information, a decision has been made that Sea Brat will not be used, and BP has been asking EPA for assistance in identifying available dispersants that are less toxic than COREXIT. Most recently, we have agreed to analyze samples of 8 to 9 commercially manufactured dispersants that OEM is procuring, in an effort to more thoroughly evaluate and compare the likely environmental and human health effects of the dispersants. We will also analyze a representative oil, and an oil-dispersant mixture. Toxicology analyses will be conducted by NCCT and estrogen activity analyses will be conducted by NHEERL. OEM has requested initial results within 7 days. OEM is also identifying contract labs to perform toxicity analyses on the samples.

#### Dioxin:

Questions continue to be raised about the possible emission of dioxin from the off-shore burns. ORD has been providing expertise to OAR and the Regions to identify viable approaches for testing and monitoring at the off-shore burn sites. A decision has not yet been made as to whether or how ORD/EPA will attempt to measure the burn plume for dioxin. Sampling of the burn plume poses extreme safety concerns. NRMRL has proposed a technique they developed that uses a remote-controlled balloon outfitted with sampling equipment. The collected samples could then be analyzed by appropriate instrumentation on land.

#### ORD Expertise for Key Operations:

In response to the Region's requests for continued ORD assistance, NERL and NRMRL have each identified senior researchers who are qualified and willing to represent EPA aboard the Brooks McCall, (or other) sampling vessel. The support by other labs will help relieve the added strain that this responsibility has put on NHEERL's Gulf Breeze lab. Dan Heggem & Dorsey Worthy (NERL) are tentatively scheduled to each staff the Brooks McCall during mid-late June. Dan and Dorsey both have shipboard experience conducting sampling and analyses in response to oil spills. We have identified at least 2 additional volunteers who have directly relevant experience, as well as 10 more scientists who are willing to provide sampling support alongside an experienced EPA scientist.

#### Synthesizing Information on Hot Topics:

We've been researching information, compiling data, and preparing supporting documents such as Fact Sheets, Q/A Documents, Talking Points. These have been to support EPA senior management in preparing for press briefings, Congressional inquiries, Congressional

hearings, and draft legislative language. Nearly all of this has been focused on the effects and efficacy of dispersant application and offshore burns. The key areas of interest continue to be the environmental and human health risks posed by the planned remedies.

(My apologies if I'm not capturing everything - there's a LOT going on!)

Thanks,  
Michele

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